WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for administering insulin-like growth factor-I (IGF-I) to a mammal so as to sustain its biological response in the treatment of a chronic disorder in the mammal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of IGF-I to the mammal to provide an exposure to IGF-I for a period of time that provides the maximum biological response in the mammal, then discontinuing said administration for a period of time equal to or less than the time period during which the IGF-I was previously administered, then administering a therapeutically effective amount of IGF-I to the mammal to provide an exposure to IGF-I for a period of time that provides the maximum biological response in the mammal, then discontinuing said administration for a period of time equal to or less than the time period during which the IGF-I was just previously administered, and repeating this pattern of administration and discontinuance of administration for as long as necessary to achieve or maintain sustained biological response in the mammal.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the mammal is a human.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the chronic disorder is chronic renal failure.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the chronic disorder is diabetes.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the chronic disorder is an anabolic disorder.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the chronic disorder is a neurological, cardiac, or immunological disorder.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered at least once a day consecutively.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered in a long-acting formulation.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the period that provides maximum biological response in the mammal is from about three to five days and the period of discontinuance of treatment of the mammal is from about two to four days.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the period that provides maximum biological response in the mammal is from about seven to twelve days and the period of discontinuance of treatment of the mammal is from about two to seven days.

11. The method of claim 1 further comprising administering another drug to the mammal during the course of treatment.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the drug is growth hormone.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein the drug is atrial natriuretic peptide.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the drug is an ACE inhibitor.

15. The method of claim 11 wherein the drug is an IGF-I binding protein or acid-labile subunit.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the IGF-I is complexed with an IGF binding protein or acid-labile subunit.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein the IGF-I is administered subcutaneously or intravenously.

18. A method for treating chronic renal failure in a mammal comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of insulin-like growth factor-I (IGF-I) to the mammal to provide an exposure to IGF-I for from about three to twelve days, then discontinuing said administration for from about two to seven days, then administering a therapeutically effective amount of IGF-I to the mammal to provide an exposure to IGF-I for from about three to twelve days, then discontinuing said administration for from about two to seven days, and repeating this pattern of administration and discontinuance of administration for as long as necessary to achieve or maintain sustained renal function in the mammal, said time periods of discontinuing administration being for a period of time equal to or less than the time period during which the IGF-I was just previously administered.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered for from about three to five days, and when it is not administered, it is not administered for from about two to four days.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered for four days, and when it is not administered, it is not administered for three days.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered for is from about seven to twelve days, and when it is not administered, it is not administered for from about two to seven days.

22. The method of claim 18 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered at least once a day consecutively.

23. The method of claim 18 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered in a sustained-release format.

24. The method of claim 18 wherein the mammal is human.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the amount of IGF-I administered per day is about 10 μg/kg to about 160 μg/kg.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein when the IGF-I is administered, it is administered daily or twice daily by a subcutaneous route.

27. The method of claim 18 wherein the mammal manifests end-stage chronic renal failure.

28. The method of claim 18 wherein an effective amount of an IGF binding protein or acid labile subunit or both is administered together with the IGF-I.

29. The method of claim 18 wherein the IGF-I is complexed with an IGF binding protein or acid labile subunit.